

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 NIC-01

DRC-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-20 OPR-02 /142 W

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P 051511Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2158

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 0752

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, BL

SUBJ: CHURCH SPEAKS OUT ON ECONOMIC MEASURES AND

COCHABAMBA INCIDENTS

REF: LA PAZ 716

1. ON FEBRUARY 2 THE PERMANENT COMMISSION F THE BOLIVIAN BISHOPS
CONFERENCE CALLED ON THE GOB TO REVISE ITS ECONOMIC DECREES TO
TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE "REAL NEEDS" OF THE WORKERS AND CAMPESINOS.

2. THE COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE OF THE BOLIVIAN BISHOPS
CONFERENCE ON THE SAME DAY DIRECTED A LETTER TO PRESIDENT BANZER
PROTESTING THAT NOT ALL PEACEFUL MEANS HAD BEEN EXHAUSTED BEDORE
THE GOB AUTHORIZED THE USE OF FORCE TO CLEAR CAMPESINOS FROM
COCHABAMBA'S ROADS. THE COMMISSION QUOTED "EYE WITNESS"REPORTS
THAT ALMOST ONE HUNDRED CAMPESINOS WERE KILLED, WITHOUT JUDGING
THE ACCURACY OF THESE REPORTS. THE COMMISSION TOOK EXEPTION TO
PRESIDENT BANZER'S EXHORTATION OF JANUARY 31 TO A GROUP OF CAMPESINOS
TO KILL EVERY EXTREMIST WHO APPEARS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. THE COMMISSIO
N

REGRETTEED "THIS ABUSE OF AUTHORITY WHICH INDISCRIMINATELY ENDANGERS
HUMAR LIFE". THE LETTER ASKED THE GOB TO ENTER INTO A SINCERE

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AND AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE WITH NATIONAL GROUPS ABOUT FUTURE

ECONOMIC MEASURES.

3. THE SEVENTH DIVISION ISSUED AN OFFICIAL REPORT ON THE COCHABAMBA INCIDENTS LISTING 13 CAMPESINOS KILLED, 10 WOUNDED AND 21 EXTREMISTS CAPTURED.

4. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY HAS NOT YET BEEN BLE TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF CASUALTIES IN COCHABAMBA ALTHOUGH THE 100 MENTIONED BY THE COMMISSION SEEMS HIGH (ESPECIALLY SINCE THERE HAVE BEEN NO CORROBORATING REPORTS THUS FAR). THE CHURCH'S STATEMENTS ARE HARDER HITTING THAN APPEARS CUSTOMARY AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS AY BE IN FOR STRAIN IN THE DAYS AHEAD.
STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, EXTREMISTS, MEETINGS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LAPAZ00752
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740255/aaaabzut.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LA PAZ 716
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <10 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH SPEAKS OUT ON ECONOMIC MEASURES AND COCHABAMBA INCIDENTS
TAGS: PINS, BL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005